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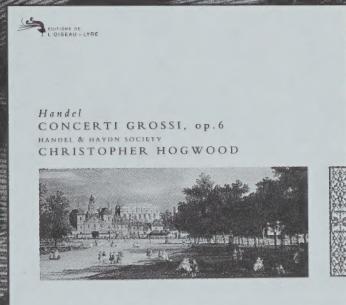


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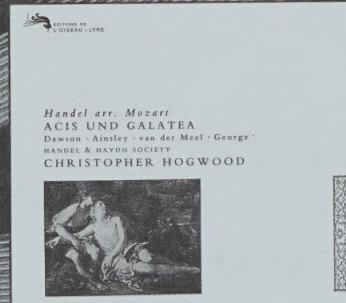
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The Handel & Haydn Society
Christopher Hogwood, Artistic Director
1993-1994 Season

Thursday, April 7 at 8:00 p.m.
Veterans Memorial Auditorium, Providence
Friday, April 8 at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 10 at 3:00 p.m.
Symphony Hall, Boston

Christopher Hogwood, Conductor
Robert Levin, Fortepiano

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 6 in F Major, "Pastoral," Op. 68

*Allegro ma non troppo – Awakening of Cheerful Feelings
upon Arrival in the Country*
Andante molto moto – Scene by the Brook
Allegro – Merry Gathering of Country People
Allegro – Thunderstorm
*Allegretto – Shepherd's song, Happy and Thankful Feelings
after the Storm*

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, Op. 58

Allegro moderato
Andante con moto
Rondo: Vivace

Robert Levin

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Allegro con brio
Andante con moto
Allegro
Allegro

The fortepiano in the Boston performances is an original instrument made by Conrad Graf in Vienna, c. 1830, and is from Robert Levin's collection.
The fortepiano in the Providence performance is provided by R.J. Regier,
Freeport, Maine, and is a model of a Graf instrument, c. 1824.

BEETHOVEN'S GRAND CONCERT OF DECEMBER 22, 1808

Owen Jander

In this program, H&H performs three well-known works by Beethoven that the composer premiered in Vienna on December 22, 1808. At this now-legendary "Akademie," Beethoven expanded his originally planned program of Symphony No. 6, Piano Concerto No. 4, and Symphony No. 5 to make a four-hour extravaganza. Following these performances, H&H recreates the entire Akademie at the historic Pabst Theatre in Milwaukee, as the centerpiece of a week-long Beethoven festival sponsored by the Historical Keyboard Society of Wisconsin.

then very importantly concluding in the proud key of C Major.

All three works involve expanding instrumental forces as they advance toward their conclusions. The hair-raising storm in the "Pastoral" Symphony brings the arrival of the timpani and two trombones — along with the trumpets and the piccolo. The finale of the Concerto begins with just the strings — and then explodes with the first appearance of the trumpets and timpani in this composition. When the C Minor Symphony bursts into C major at the outset of its finale, Beethoven introduces the trombones, piccolo, and contrabassoon for the first time in that work.

During the course of 1808, Beethoven's original plan for his December concert gradually expanded. He decided to conclude this musical banquet with a special dessert, an amusing divertissement for solo piano, with orchestra — and with a chorus as well: the Choral Fantasy. (This work restates the C Minor-C Major tonal shape of the Fifth Symphony.) Since he needed extra funds to hire a chorus, Beethoven approached Prince Nikolaus Esterhazy, for whom, in 1807, he had composed his C Major Mass. Part of the arrangement he made with the prince was that the concert should now include two movements from Esterhazy's Mass, the Gloria and the Sanctus.

With an eye to ticket sales, Beethoven then decided to include a concert aria for soprano and orchestra ("Ah, Perfido!" which he had composed back in 1796). This grand display piece was to be sung by the young Anna Milder-Hauptmann, Vienna's favorite prima donna — who, ironically, canceled out at the last minute, and another soprano was called in to do the job. As an additional device to sell tickets, Beethoven then decided to include an audience-pleasing fantasy that he would improvise at the piano.

And so this originally very compact program swelled to a concert that lasted over four hours(!). The concert, held on the winter solstice, took place in an unheated theater. The whole program was insufficiently rehearsed. Not surprising, therefore, this "most amazing concert in the history of Western music" was a fiasco! By extraordinary coincidence, one member of the audience was one of Europe's most important

There can be no question about it: the most amazing concert in the history of Western music was the one that Ludwig van Beethoven presented at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna on the evening of December 22, 1808. This stupendous event was more than five years in the planning; to wit, the germinal musical thoughts for the three works to be heard in this concert are all encountered in the elaborate sketchbook for Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony — these early jottings dating from late 1803. In its original conception, Beethoven's 1808 concert involved just these three works: the Sixth, or "Pastoral," Symphony (which, in the 1808 concert, was called his Fifth Symphony); the Fourth Piano Concerto; and then, as a finale, the C Minor Symphony, which we now know as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, but when it was first performed, was numbered his Sixth. (The later switch in the numbering had simply to do with the sequence in the publication of these two symphonies. Performed in a single program, as in this one —the "Pastoral" Symphony must serve as the launching pad for the culminating C Minor Symphony.)

The concert of December 22, 1808, as it was originally conceived, employed a clearly unified tonal plan — as tight a scheme as can be fashioned in music. It was "a concert in C major" — with the "Pastoral" Symphony in F major (the sub-dominant key), the Fourth Piano Concerto in G major (the dominant key), and the C Minor Symphony beginning in the minor mode, but

music commentators of the time, J. F. Reichardt, who described this concert in elaborate detail — but concluded, "I wish I had had the courage to leave earlier, after all."

If ever there was wisdom in the maxim "less is more," it is learned from Beethoven's concert of December 22, 1808, as it eventually happened — compared to his admirable original plan. That plan was conceived in the aftermath of the Heiligenstadt Testament, the famous document of 1802, in which Beethoven revealed to posterity the anguish of his awareness that he was going deaf, and his determination to survive this life crisis. As a result, the three masterpieces in this concert are very subtly autobiographical. In each of these three works the most revealing, central communication occurs in the second movement.

THE "PASTORAL" SYMPHONY

The "Pastoral" Symphony depicts the Artist in the embrace of Nature. The first movement, having to do with "arrival in the countryside," is characterized by melodic material of a narrow, winding shape, in imitation of shepherds "noodling" away on their flutes. The calm and pastoral mood is above all determined, however, by the remarkably slow movement of the harmonies, under the influence of the drones of shepherds' bagpipes.

The "Scene by the Brook" is a conversation involving three partners. The brook itself "speaks" in a variety of inflections, sometimes calm, sometimes animated — but then, toward the end of the development section, in such hushed tones as to be almost inaudible. This is symbolic, for as Beethoven found himself no longer able to perceive the soft sounds of Nature, he sensed that something was happening to his ears. The calls of birds tell the same story — culminating in the cryptic rhythmic pattern in the famous birdcalls at the end: long, long, long, short — a meaningful reversal of that universally familiar short-short-short-long motif with which the Fifth Symphony launches — this representing "Fate," as Beethoven tells us (the Fate of deafness). Again and again throughout his "Scene by the Brook," Beethoven presents an ever-changing melodic phrase that has to do with the idea of contemplation — contemplation which, at the end, becomes a statement of resignation.

After the jolly gathering of peasants, and after the storm (the greatest musical storm in history), comes the shepherd's song of joy in the aftermath of the storm. After wave upon wave of ever-mounting joy, the music becomes hushed. "Lord, we thank thee!" wrote the composer in his sketchbook, to describe this exquisite passage. And then, in the quiet background, the horn plays the shepherd's song, "con sordino" — with mute. In Italian, "sordo" means "deaf."



*The Theater an der Wein,
where Beethoven's famous Akademie took place.
(Engraving from the Historical Museum of Vienna)*

THE FOURTH PIANO CONCERTO

The Fourth Piano Concerto was, throughout, inspired by the Orpheus legend; and here, in this larger biographical framework, Beethoven presents himself as an Orpheus figure. The concerto originated with its second movement, which, from the first measure to the last, reflects the famous story of Orpheus in Hades, overcoming the resistance of the infernal Furies, in his effort to regain his lost Euridice. The old story of the Power of Song.

The first movement has to do with The Song of Orpheus. As Ovid reports, before Orpheus sets out to sing, he quietly tests the strings of his lyre. This explains those opening five measures for the solo piano; it also explains the hushed entrance of the strings — the amazed response to the very sound of the Orphic lyre.

The finale is inspired by the story of the enraged Bacchantes who seek to destroy Orpheus. They can do so only by drowning out the protective magic of the sound of his lyre. And so, says Ovid, they blast down upon him "with wind instruments, brass instruments, and drums" — which is what occurs in the jolting fortissimo, at measure 32. The newly invented

fortepiano for which Beethoven composed this concerto was, by comparison to the Mozartian instrument, a behemoth! And this finale is the most noisy and violent movement in the early history of the piano concerto.

THE "SYMPHONY OF FATE"

"Thus Fate knocks at the door!" was Beethoven's comment about the opening of his Fifth Symphony. The first movement is history's most gripping encounter with musical rhetoric, as Beethoven himself comes to grips with the awareness of his encroaching deafness: the shock, the obsession, the quest for relief, the return of the obsession, the questioning, the pleading, the defiance . . .

The second movement is Beethoven's monologue on the subject of how to cope with such a life crisis: serenity? courage? The composer sways back and forth between these two alternatives, forever questioning. He stresses serenity; then he stresses courage. Finally, at one magical point ("più mosso") he realizes that he must move on. As Goethe had so often remarked, the rescue from despair is

to be found in "Tatigkeit"— "activity!" With this awareness, the skies open — and Beethoven entered upon the most creative period of his life.

The third movement is a thing of black humor. It leads to a musical bridge that tells us of thoughts of suicide: "More of that, and I would have taken my life," reports Beethoven in his Heiligenstadt Testament. Then, however, this tormented man declared, "It was my *Art* that held me back." And so, in the grand harmonic scheme of the concert, we arrive in C Major — and what a C Major!

The "Fate" motif, which had so haunted the first movement, the second movement, the third movement, and the bridge, is now, in this finale, tossed forth as a simple, merry tune!

Beethoven's concert of December 22, 1808 — this most amazing concert in the history of Western music — is thus the greatest account of human courage in all art.

Owen Jander is a Beethoven scholar and former Catherine Mills Davis Professor of Music History at Wellesley College.

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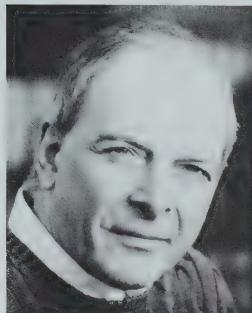
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CHRISTOPHER HOGWOOD, CONDUCTOR



One of the world's most active conductors, Christopher Hogwood is internationally recognized as a pioneer in "Historically Informed Performance." He is the founder of The Academy of Ancient Music, the first British

orchestra formed to play Baroque and Classical music on instruments appropriate to the period. He now shares with that orchestra a busy schedule of performances, touring, and recording. Mr. Hogwood has conducted many of the world's great orchestras; he is also active conducting opera, and is a regular guest conductor of the Australian Opera. He enjoys a fine reputation as a harpsichordist and clavichord player, and is also a highly successful recording artist for London Records/L'Oiseau-Lyre. Despite his busy performing and recording schedule, Mr. Hogwood has also written a number of books, including his highly successful biography of Handel, published by Thames and Hudson. Among his many honors, he holds an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Keele, and was made a CBE in 1989.

THE HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY

The Handel & Haydn Society is a premier chorus and period orchestra under the artistic direction of Christopher Hogwood, and is a leader in "Historically Informed Performance." Founded in 1815, H&H is the oldest continuously performing arts organization in the United States. The Society gave the first performance in America of *Messiah* in 1818, and has been performing the work at the holidays every year since 1854. In recent years, H&H has achieved national and international acclaim through recordings on the London Records/L'Oiseau-Lyre label, national broadcasts, and performances across the country. H&H also offers an esteemed Chamber Series under the direction of Associate Conductor John Finney, with concerts at both Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory and Sanders Theatre in Cambridge. H&H's innovative educational program brings the enjoyment and knowledge of classical music to over 5,000 students in 45 schools throughout Massachusetts.

ROBERT LEVIN, FORTEPIANO



Robert Levin has been acclaimed throughout the United States and Europe for his imaginative performances at the keyboard. His brilliant improvisations in the style of Mozart, and his improvised cadenzas have dazzled

audiences and critics alike. Mr. Levin's appearances in recital and with such major orchestras as Boston, Montreal, and Chicago span repertoire from the sixteenth century to the present. Equally at home at the fortepiano and piano, Mr. Levin has collaborated with numerous early-music leaders including Christopher Hogwood. A recognized Mozart scholar, Mr. Levin has completed many Mozart fragments; these finished works have been published, recorded, and performed throughout the world. He is currently teaching at Harvard University. Mr. Levin has performed with H&H on a number of occasions, most recently in the autumn of 1992; he will also be featured performer next October in the opening program of H&H's 1994-95 season, the Mozart Weekend.

JOIN H&H FOR THE 1994-95 SEASON!

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For more information, see your program insert, or stop by the information/subscription tables at this performance to speak with H&H staff and volunteers.

We look forward to seeing you next season!



Join H&H also for the next concerts at Symphony Hall: "Spring Suites" on April 22 and 24. Daniel Stepner leads the H&H orchestra in Bach's *Orchestral Suites No. 1 and 3*, and Telemann's *Water Music* and *Don Quixote* suites. Call H&H at (617) 266-3605 for more information.

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The Conductor's Circle of the Handel & Haydn Society brings together individuals who express their deep commitment to Baroque and Classical music by donating \$1,000 or more to the Annual Fund. The generosity of Conductor's Circle members has enabled Artistic Director Christopher Hogwood to establish H&H as a premier period instrument orchestra and as a national leader in historically informed performance.

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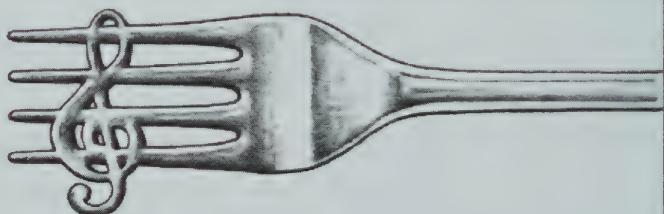
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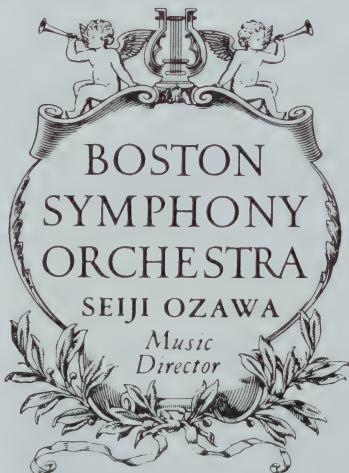
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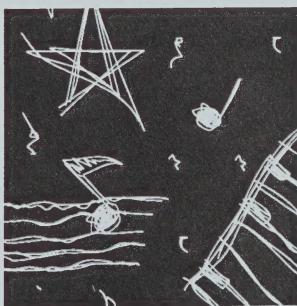
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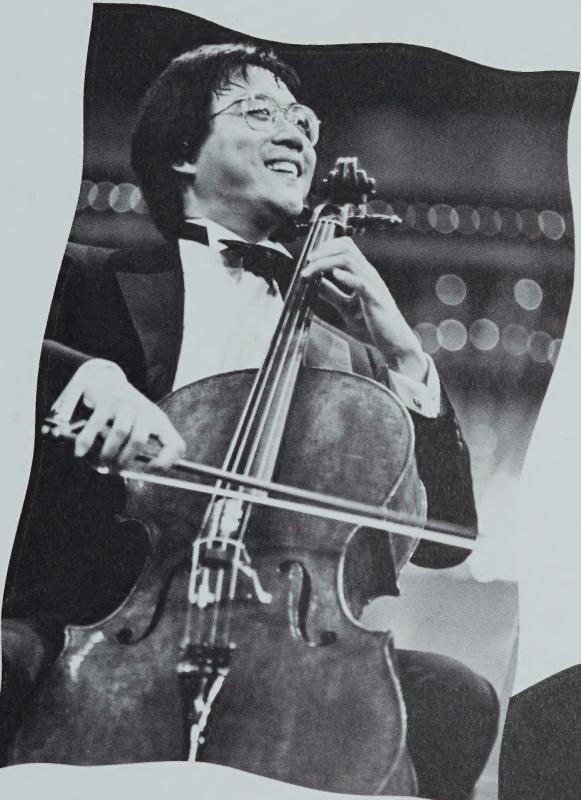
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